

HB 2176 -- TUITION RATES AND TAX CREDITS FOR STUDENTS

SPONSOR: Curtis

INCOME TAX DEDUCTION FOR TUITION (Section 143.128, RSMo)

Beginning January 1, 2017, this bill authorizes an income tax deduction equal to the tuition paid for up to the last 30 credit hours required to complete an associate or bachelor degree from a Missouri public two-year or four-year higher education institution or the average tuition for the same number of last credit hours if enrolled at the University of Missouri, whichever is less.

The provisions of this section will expire December 31 six years after the effective date.

REMEDIAL COURSE REIMBURSEMENT (Sections 161.720 and 173.750)

Beginning with the 2016-17 academic year, this bill allows a person who enrolls in a public higher education institution after graduating from a Missouri public high school to apply for reimbursement of tuition for remedial courses, as defined in the bill. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must establish a procedure by which a student may apply for reimbursement twice a year. Reimbursement will be proportional to the graduating high school's three-year average percentage of students enrolled in remedial courses.

The Joint Committee on Education must review data on remediation rates after the 2020-21 academic year to determine the effects of the reimbursement program on remediation rates, the correlation between end-of-course assessments and the need for remediation, the effect of competency alignment, the extent to which information about remediation rates is used to improve high school instruction, and other relevant matters.

MISSOURI TUITION EQUITY ACT (Section 174.820)

This bill also establishes the Missouri Tuition Equity Act that requires the governing board of any Missouri higher education institution receiving any state funds to deem each student a Missouri resident if the student is eligible as specified in the bill.

The resident status will apply unless the student establishes residence outside the state. Institutions under the bill cannot deny admission solely on immigration status. Information collected in the admission process remains confidential.

HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION (Sections 174.850 and 174.860)

For any year in which a public higher education institution increases student tuition rates from the previous year, 33% of the increase must be designated for faculty improvement. Beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year, the tuition charged to a qualifying student cannot exceed the amount that the student was charged at the time he or she first enrolled in the qualifying institution during the five continuous academic years after enrollment, excluding summer session classes. The qualifying student's tuition must remain the same for the customary amount of time required to complete the student's degree program as determined by the qualifying institution. If the qualifying student changes majors during the time period, his or her tuition must equal the amount he or she would have been assessed had he or she been admitted to the changed major program when he or she first enrolled in the institution. Undergraduates with locked-in rates who pursue a higher degree must lock in tuition rates as of the first semester of their graduate studies, and the previous undergraduate locked-in tuition no longer applies.

The bill contains an emergency clause for a certain section.

This bill combines HB 905 (2015).